

Amendments to the Specification:

Please delete the title in it's entirety and replace with the following:

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR SPECTROSCOPY OF THE OPTICAL EMISSION OF A LIQUID
EXCITED BY A LASER

Please add the following new paragraph at page 1, after the title of the application:

This application is the U.S. national phase application of PCT International Application No. PCT/FR2003/050033, filed August 20, 2003, and claims priority of French Patent Application No. 02/11766, filed September 24, 2002.

Please insert the following heading before paragraph **[0001]**:

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

Please insert the following heading before paragraph **[0002]**:

BACKGROUND

Please replace paragraph **[0007]** with the following amended paragraph **[0007]**

[0007] However, such analysis is complex when the compound analyzed is physically modified by the impact of the laser beam. This is so when the compound is a liquid and the laser beam is applied to its surface, as described in the document-[1] entitled, "panoramic laser-induced breakdown spectrometry of water" by Messrs. Charfi and Harith, published in Spectrochimica Acta Part B: Atomic Spectroscopy, July 31, 2002, vol. 57, No. 7, pp. 1141 to 1153.

Please replace paragraph **[0014]** with the following amended paragraph **[0014]**

[0014] Such surface problems can interfere with analyses such as the one cited by Nai-Ho Cheung and Edward S. Yeung in the document-[2] entitled "Distribution of sodium and potassium within individual human erythrocytes by pulsed laser vaporization in a sheath flow," published in Analytical Chemistry 1994, 66, pp. 929 to 936.

Please replace paragraph **[0019]** with the following amended paragraph **[0019]**

[0019] To perform an analysis of a liquid without having to deal with the problems mentioned above, it is known to generate the plasma radiating into the interior of the liquid being analyzed, as described by David A. Cremers, Leon J. Radziemski, Thomas R. Loree, in the document-{3} entitled, "Apparatus and method for spectrochemical analysis of liquids using the laser spark," in American patent No. 4,925,307 published 15 May 1990.

Please replace paragraph **[0025]** with the following amended paragraph **[0025]**

[0025] For example, in document-{4} entitled, "Determination of colloidal iron in water by laser-induced breakdown spectroscopy" presented by Yoshiro Ito, Osamu Ueki, Susumu Nakamura in Analytica Chimica Acta 199 (1995), pp. 401-405, the authors compare the properties of a helium, air or argon environment of a liquid to improve the spectroscopy of the emissions produced by the laser beam excitation of the latter.

Please insert the following heading before paragraph **[0035]**:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Please replace paragraph **[0036]** with the following amended paragraph **[0036]**

[0036] The gas thus has a function of sweeping away the residues of a preceding plasma, and also of contention on the liquid whose surface is stabilized, which contributes also to the repeatability of the analyses.

Please insert the following heading before paragraph **[0052]**:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Please insert the following heading before paragraph **[0053]**:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION